

S T A T E M E N T

by

THE NEW YORK ACADEMY OF MEDICINE

on

Methadone Management of Heroin Addiction

THE recent *National Conference on Methadone Treatment* held at The Rockefeller University revealed that a significant number of heroin addicts are being managed with methadone by private practitioners on an ambulatory basis. Instances were reported where such office-treated addicts have been dropped from treatment for various reasons. This has caused serious problems for the patients, physicians, and hospitals—as well as for health and enforcement agencies.

The New York Academy of Medicine notes that the methadone technique for managing heroin addicts appears promising. However the Academy believes that indiscriminate management of heroin addicts on an ambulatory basis by individual physicians who are inexperienced in the use of this technique is a dangerous practice and should be discouraged.

While the Academy does not wish to comment at this time on either the short- or long-term merit of the methadone technique, it believes it is necessary to point out that methadone-management programs should be carried out only in association with evaluation procedures of an objective character such as those which are conducted in connection with the work of the group headed by Dr. Vincent Dole in New York City.

The Academy holds the view that the management of heroin addicts by use of methadone is best served when the results are subjected to critical, objective evaluation by an outside, independent agency.

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President

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